

submission form

Mental Health Education
and Resource Centre (MHERC)

Your Submission

You may use this form for your submission if you wish. Whether you use this form or not, please follow the guidelines for preparing submissions on the previous page.

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Signature Murray Cameron

Please tick which applies:

- I do NOT wish to make a personal submission at the hearing, and ask that this written submission be considered.
- I wish to talk to the main points in my written submission at the hearings to be held between Tuesday 7 June and Friday 10 June 2005.

I enclose my reply to the Community Outcomes document for Christchurch Otahutahi, About Disability.

I reply from the perspective of Centre Manager of a Community Mental Health Organisation Mental Health Education and Resource Centre (MHERC), and attach my submission document.

My submissions relate to the following pages of the 2006 Draft Annual Plan which are attached with relevant sections highlighted: pp 11, 12, 13, 14, 32, 37, 51, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 58.

Please continue your submission on the back of this page. You may add more pages if you wish.
Submissions close on Friday 13 May 2005

Received 1.25 pm
18 May

2006 Draft Annual Plan

At least 1 in 5 people in our city and province will experience mental illness at any time or be on that journey. This illness and disability will have profound impacts on Christchurch City and outcomes, and the city environment will at least in part, create the conditions for mental illness to appear and to be sustained or perpetuated.

- ♦ All of the Outcomes of our city, and the key challenges are inextricably linked with the mental health and well being of our citizens.
- ♦ All of the Outcomes and challenges for our city are areas where I believe it is vital that MHERC provide a greater community role in:
 - Mental Health education and training.
 - Sharing and loaning of resources and information from our Resource Room/library.
 - Support for people and family with experience of mental illness from our 35 affiliated mental health groups and organisations.
 - Support and liaison from our NGO community worker and our rural liaison staff member.
 - Our brokerage role in information and support, through our Christchurch Mental Health Information Booklet, and North Canterbury Mental Health Information Booklet, our website, pamphlets.
- ♦ The Christchurch Community Mapping Project reports that the major causes of death in Christchurch (as in New Zealand) are listed as Cancer (26%), Ischaemic Heart Disease (24%) and Cerebrovascular Disease (Stroke) (10%). In 1997, these causes collectively accounted for almost 60% of all deaths in the city.

This statement gives an incomplete picture of the increasing importance of mental illness and disability in the future, and the urgency of planning now for future need. The World Health Organisation (WHO) Global Burden of Disease model predicts Mental Illness (substantially including Depression) as rising to first or second ranking disorder in terms of death and disability within the next few years for Pacific Rim countries like ours. This will have obvious implications for Mental Health planning and for education, information and support services provided by Mental Health Education and Resource Centre which will need to play an increasingly important role in facilitating awareness of this issue and increasing causative and preventive factors, in the Christchurch community.

- ♦ Education is a key determinant of health. Adequate education is one of the keys to enable people to take up various health promotion messages. Access to education, and keeping people connected to education is a key ingredient to improving health.

It is significant that more than 70% of the Christchurch population are registered members of the library and many others use the library for study and reading. Of concern therefore, is the low level of recognition and usage of our Mental Health Education and Resource Centre resource and lending library, which contains a variety of books, tapes, CDs pamphlets, booklets and electronic information on mental illness and mental health issues. I believe that a considerable increase in funding and support will be needed for our organisation if we are to be a key player in meeting the mental health challenges that lie ahead for our community. Organisations like ours, operating in the community funded/not-for-profit sector and serving disadvantaged and low-income people are less able to rely on fee income. Consequently, we are much more reliant on government, philanthropic and lottery funding, and therefore exposed to the continued uncertainties that surround these charitable sources of funding.

We are fortunate to have had ongoing financial support from the Christchurch City Council Social Initiatives Fund to offset our rental costs in Securities House. This enables us to offer low cost rental space for offices and for meeting rooms to smaller Mental Health support groups and organisations as part of our activity and operation. We are extremely grateful for this generous contribution to our operating costs, but would submit/identify that our continued and increased future presence and acknowledged value in the community, will require greater funding support for both building and resources from the Christchurch City Council.

In terms of MHERC's learning/education role and resource library I believe that we could in the future, be viewed as an additional, specialised city library and therefore receive the financial and other support from Christchurch City Council that this would provide.

Our efforts to obtain funding for the expansion of our present Centre in Securities House from two floors to three to allow for the growth of our nine resident mental health support organisations was unsuccessful because one of our major funders (The Canterbury Community Trust) was unwilling to fund improvements to a building not owned by them or the City Council.

This submission therefore also proposes a collaborative approach by the Christchurch City Council and the Canterbury Community Trust towards adequate housing and funding our Mental Health Education and Resource Centre.

The development of the Beckenham Service and Learning Centre has been widely appreciated and admired. It is a model of community involvement and learning that we would be keen to see duplicated to involve our Mental Health Education and Resource Centre.